SHORE LINE

NEWSLETTER

VOL. II NO.1 APRIL, 1994

DRYDEN COLLECTION UPDATE

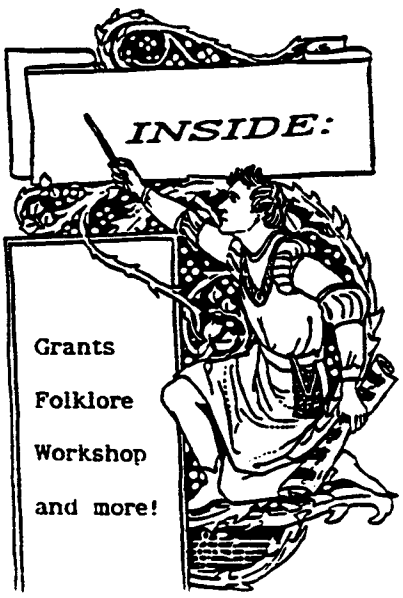
The acquisition of the Leslie Powell Dryden Collection has proven to be one of the most used and invaluable collections at RCDHAC. This collection consists of more than five hundred manuscript volumes of records dealing with families of Old Somerset County on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Mr. Dryden, before his death in 1991, had made plans for his collection to be donated to RCDHAC, thinking the location would be ideal for those who are researching local and family history of the lower Eastern Shore. His assumption was right on target. The collection is used daily by scholars, students and "part-time" genealogists.

Dryden was nationally known for his work on the families of the Eastern Shore. Although Mr. Dryden was not a genealogist by profession it was his life-long hobby. He was meticulous and thorough in his research, which included first hand searches in all existing public records and documents at the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the Maryland State Archives in Annapolis, MD, as well as records at the county court houses of Somerset, Worcester, and Wicomico Counties. In addition, he familiarized himself with the records of Sussex County, DE, and Northampton and Accomack Counties on Virginia's Eastern Shore. All these materials were carefully filed in notebooks by family. Interpretation of Mr. Dryden's handwriting is to say the least a bit challenging, but with the assistance of the staff at RCDHAC, interpretation will be less of a problem. Anyone wishing to do local history or genealogical research will find this collection indispensable.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

In addition to the folklore and genealogical volunteers, RCDHAC will be offering an undergraduate student volunteer program introducing social science and history majors to the basic principles of archival accessioning and arrangement. For the volunteer, experience in the field can be an invaluable asset for building a social science or history resume. Since RCDHAC is guided by the principles of the Society of American Archivists, the volunteer will be responsible for maintaining and adhering to these professional guidelines, and having a working knowledge of them should prove to have lasting benefits. As for the benefits for RCDHAC, we will be able to receive some much needed assistance in the following areas: preservation, accessioning, genealogy, primary documentation, and office work.

For answers to questions or assistance, please contact Alvin Garrison at RCDHAC, (410) 543-6312.



SSU GRADUATE STUDENT DEVELOPS THESIS ON CCC CAMPS ON THE DELMARVA PENINSULA

Barbara Lewis, who is currently working toward her Master's Degree in History from Salisbury State University, is researching The Civilian Conservation Corps as established on the Delmarva Peninsula during the Great Depression. Thus far, her research has uncovered nine such camps, and she has selected the one located at Goldsboro, Md. as her main focus of study. While several articles have been written on other Alphabet Programs initiated by F.D.R.'s New Deal Program in the area, there appears to be little done on the CCC.

Ms. Lewis is incorporating the use of the oral interview, along with empirical evidence, for her study. She hopes to capture the true significance of this worthwhile and apparently successful endeavor by President Roosevelt to put unemployed young men to work locally conserving natural resources.

The benefits of this New Deal measure can still be seen throughout the country in its successful initiation of projects which focused on soil erosion, much needed reforestation, fire control designs, drainage ditch and pond constructions and a wide array of projects making physical improvements on the land. However, more importantly, at the time of its creation, Roosevelt's CCC touched the heart of the general populace of America who found themselves deeply effected by the international economic depression occurring at the time. He took their thoughts "back to the basics", (nature and its conservation) through the incorporation of their "hope for the future", (their children). Thus, the CCC afforded opportunity and hope to an otherwise desperate and disillusioned generation of young people, utilized the military in a pacifist capacity, and raised the spirit of the nation as a whole.

Ms. Lewis feels that examining the Corps on a local grass roots level offers an opportunity to discover its influence upon the area in which we live. Its projects, effects on business, involvement in community life, as well as its long term influence on its participants are all a part of the project Ms. Lewis is undertaking. Thus far, she has found it to be a challenging and rewarding effort and hopes to complete her thesis early this summer.

If anyone can assist Ms. Lewis with her oral history research, please contact Alvin Garrison at the Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, who will pass along the information to Ms. Lewis.

SSU UNDERGRADUATES UPDATE

Within the rooms of the Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture lurk two undergraduate assistants. The newer employee, Meredith Wagner, was hired in the Fall of 1993. She volunteered in the Research Center during Spring '93 for Dr. Polly Stewart's Folklore and Folklife class, and when classes resumed last fall, the Research Center offered her a job, which she gladly accepted. Meredith is a second semester junior working towards a degree in history and is from Howard County, Maryland. She usually works on preserving old documents in the Research Center, and she knows that her hands-on experience will help her when she leaves SSU.

Christina Pistolakis began working at the Research Center during the Fall of 1992. She is currently a second semester junior and a Social Science major. Christina, from Ocean County, New Jersey, usually does accessioning work with new collections. She is in the process of updating the integrated hard copy records and computerized accession records, which helps familiarize her with all of the records and collections held at the Research Center. This experience, she feels, will be a great asset to her in her future endeavors.

FINDING THOSE ELUSIVE ANCESTORS

Do you sometimes feel your ancestors deliberately tried to cover their tracks? Do you wonder if even J. Edgar Hoover could have found your Granny Lizzie? Have you found three "Charles Who-evers" when you really only wanted one grandfather?

WE HAVE HELP FOR YOU!

The Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture is offering a series of workshops to coincide with the annual Lower Shore Genealogical Society's Symposium. On Thursday, May 5, we invite beginning researchers in family history or experienced genealogists to attend the following morning sessions beginning at 10 a.m.

1. The Public Record: What kinds of official records were generated by the colonial and 19-century government in Maryland, Delaware and Virginia?

2. Land Records: What kinds of records were generated relating to land holdings, and what kinds of information might one derive from them?

3. Where They Lived: How can we learn more about our history by examining the buildings and homes our ancestors erected?

4. Personal Records: What kinds of personal records were generated and how does one use them to learn more about our ancestors?

After a lunch break, the afternoon session will begin at 1 p.m. with:

1. The Religious Records: What kinds of records were generated by churches on Delmarva from 1634-1900?

2. Court Records: What kinds of information might one derive from a study of the various court records from the 1600's to 1900?

A hands-on workshop, using an exercise manual utilizing these records will follow. Staff, Directors and volunteers will give personal assistance to participants, and suggest ways to develop a family history. The Research Center has a collection of approximately 1,000 reels of microfilmed public records and vital statistics, as well as manuscript collections focusing on Somerset, Worcester and Wicomico counties in Maryland; Accomack and Northampton counties in Virginia and Sussex County, Delaware. Maps, personal papers, The Archives of Maryland, and photographs are also contained in the collection.

Attendance is limited to the first 35 registrants, and the fee is $35.00. Additionally, participants may register for independent work on Friday, May 6, and receive individual assistance from the Staff Archivists for an additional fee of $20.00.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: SALISBURY STATE FOUNDATION. Complete the form below and mail to : Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, Power Professional Building, Salisbury State University, Salisbury, MD. 21801.

Please register me for the Thursday, May 5, 1994, Family History Workshop

name:_____

address:_____

_____

phone:_____

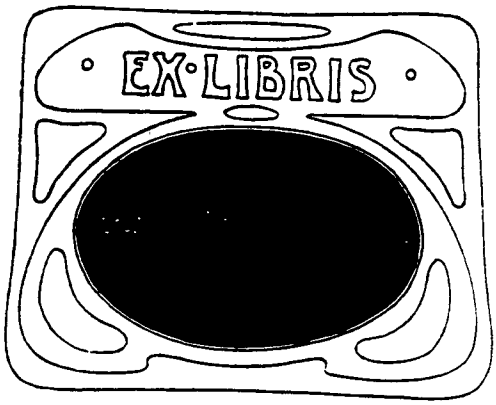
registration fee: $35.00_____

Please register me for the Friday, May 6, 1994, individual research day.

registration fee: $20.00_____, but FREE to members who have paid their yearly Research Center use fee!

A VERIFICATION OF YOUR REGISTRATION AND A MAP WILL FOLLOW.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION



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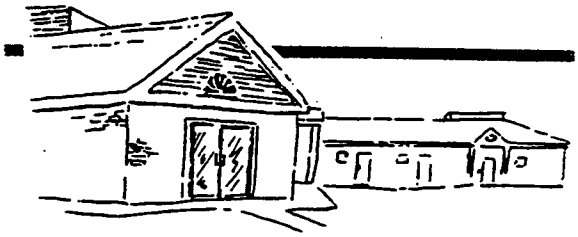


Information concerning the SSU Foundation, Inc., SRN 6032 may be obtained by writing to the SSU Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 2655, Salisbury, MD 21802 or from the Secretary of State.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO SALISBURY STATE FOUNDATION WITH RCDHAC PRINTED IN THE MEMO SECTION ON THE CHECK.

Mail to:
RESEARCH CENTER FOR DELMARVA HISTORY AND CULTURE, SALISBURY STATE UNIVERSITY, SALISBURY, MD, 21801.

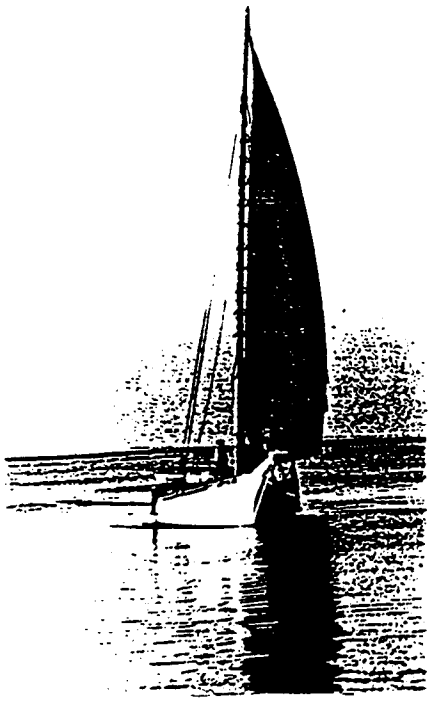
Research Center Staff Preparing Grant Applications:

"Orlando Wootten's Delmarva" Exhibit Included in Plans for Fall

Mary Klein, Archivist at the Research Center, and Directors Sylvia Bradley, Polly Stewart, Ray Thompson, and Peter Lade have been working diligently since last fall preparing grant applications for a number of new projects planned for the next year.

Presently being considered by Maryland Humanities Council is a grant to prepare an exhibit and catalog based on the works of well-known photo-journalist Orlando Wootten. Wootten retired several years ago, but his extensive collection of photographs remain as evidence of the unique, colorful folklife and cultural history of the Delmarva peninsula. The exhibit will open in October in the Atrium Gallery in the University Center. The catalog should be available at that time. Also featured will be a lecture on the significance of Delmarva folklife and the importance of preserving a record of it. The date for this talk has not been confirmed at this time, but will be publicized well in advance.

A much more ambitious project will be submitted to the National Endowment for the Humanities for funding; this is a plan to survey the body of historical and cultural knowledge relating to the African-American people of Maryland's lower Eastern Shore from the 1600s through the early 20th century. This project will span several years and should result in an incomparable wealth of research material about Delmarva.



create finding guides and increase the accessibility of some of the large collections which the Research Center has recently obtained. These cover a wide variety of kinds of materials, ranging from surveyors papers to the personal papers of a long-time Delmarva jurist to the personal papers of several families from the lower Shore.

Klein Leaving Research Center

Hundreds of patrons who have done research in the Research Center over the past two years have come to know and rely on Mary Klein. If Mary could not find that name or will or file or reference it was not likely to be found. Not only did she have a completely thorough knowledge of the holdings of the Center, but she knew what it all meant. She could interpret, transcribe, explain, and analyze even the most puzzling bits of information. Students came to respect her abilities so much they began to credit her in their written papers! She has been teacher, manager, clerk, supervisor, and even sometimes dishwasher! The co-directors have come to rely on her so completely and with such confidence they regularly turn to her for direction and suggestions. For the past year, Mary has worn the title of Staff Archivist, but she has become much more than that. She virtually ran the Center.

Alas, it is with GREAT sadness that we must report that Mary will be leaving us for the colder climes of Wisconsin. Her husband, The Rev. John Klein, who has been rector of St. Andrew's Church in Princess Anne for the past four years, has accepted a post in La Crosse. We wish them well, but will certainly miss Mary's tremendous wealth of knowledge, her cheery disposition, and her friendly and efficient manner in the Research Center. In typically Mary-fashion, she promises not to leave us hanging, but is beginning to pass on her experiences and tips to the new [this semester] Graduate Assistant Alvin Garrison. Alvin already has begun to assume some of Mary's duties and is bringing a dynamic approach to his position. We know he will be the same kind of great asset to the Center which Mary has been.

We won't say goodbye, Mary. You know by now that old adage about Delmarva; once you get the sand in your shoes, you will be bound to come back. So -- until later, and thanks.

HANDS-ON LEARNING A VALUABLE SUPPLEMENT TO BOOK LEARNING

Students in folklore classes at Salisbury State University are showing an increasing interest in using primary resources at the Research Center, an increase made possible by our move into new and larger quarters in January 1992. Once we had enough space, we could invite students in to browse among student folklore collections from years past--the folklore archives date back a quarter century, having been informally founded in 1968 by Dr. Paul Dowell during his tenure in the English Department at Salisbury State)--as well as to examine maps, genealogical data, and other archival holdings in the Center.

All folklore students at Salisbury State must do a semester project of some kind. Until two years ago their only two project options were library research or field research, which they would write up and deposit in the folklore archives at the Research Center. But the enhanced space and facilities of the Center's new location now make it possible to offer students a third project option: working at the Center with existing collections of primary materials, both folkloric and historical.

Students who elect the third option agree to a specified number of hours working in the Center, typically 20, or four hours a week for five weeks. (This figure is based upon the estimated number of hours they would put in per week if engaged in an equivalent project in the library or field.) Student workers consult with Center staff to decide on the Center project most suitable to their interests and skills, and like the other students they submit a project proposal to their folklore instructor. Like their peers in the library or field, they conduct bibliographic research to enhance their knowledge about their topic, and once their hours have been fulfilled, they (like students in other projects) write a report seven pages long or longer about their experience and about the theoretical issues underlying it.

For many students, the chance to do such hands-on work with existing archival primary materials provides the most satisfying academic experience of their undergraduate careers.

NEW ADDITION TO RESEARCH CENTER STAFF

We have had an addition to our team at the Research Center. At the beginning of February 1994, Alvin Garrison, a graduate student in History, began working at the center. Originally from Cape May, New Jersey, Alvin attended the Hyde School in Bath, Maine for his high school education. The school prepared Alvin to enter into the world of academia, providing him with a strong background in character development. After high school, Alvin went off to Ohio University in Athens, Ohio where he studied Interpersonal Communication, and received a Bachelors of Science Degree in Communication in 1990. He then took a few years off from school until Spring of 1993 when he enrolled in Salisbury State University's Graduate History program. In the Fall of 1993, Alvin interned at the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, which exposed him to all aspects of museum work and fueled his interest in working with the Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture. He is now the Graduate Assistant for the Center and is available to assist members, patrons, and students in research or genealogical needs.

SANTO DOMINGO EXHIBIT OPENS

The Westside Historical Society, in cooperation with the Maryland Humanities Council, and the Research Center, created an exhibit at the Northwestern Elementary School in Mardela Springs, MD. The exhibit, entitled "These Roots Were Free", based on the research of historian and archivist Mary Klein, centered around the free black community of Santo Domingo and its 19th-century roots.

Santo Domingo, now located in Wicomico County, was home to hundreds of free blacks as early as 1820, and many names are still present today: Armwood, Beauly, Bluett, Brown, Dutton, Game and Puckham. Their community was quite a self-sufficient, prosperous town of farmers, artisans, merchants, manufacturers, and watermen who lived in harmony with their white neighbors, many of whom were slaveowners. The exhibit contains photographs, documents, and papers which visually tells the story of these pioneers.

The exhibit ran through March 24 at the Northwestern School and will be at RCDHAC until the end of the Spring.

Mrs. Klein, who has completed her graduate studies at SSU, is preparing a booklet for sale, which encapsules the information from the "These Roots Are Free" lectures and exhibit. If you would like a copy, please fill out the order form below.

Please reserve _____ copy(ies) of "Santo Domingo: These Roots Were Free"

For:_____

Address:_____

_____

Phone:_____

Price: $8.00 per copy. _____paid
_____please bill me.

Checks should be made payable to: Westside Historical Society.

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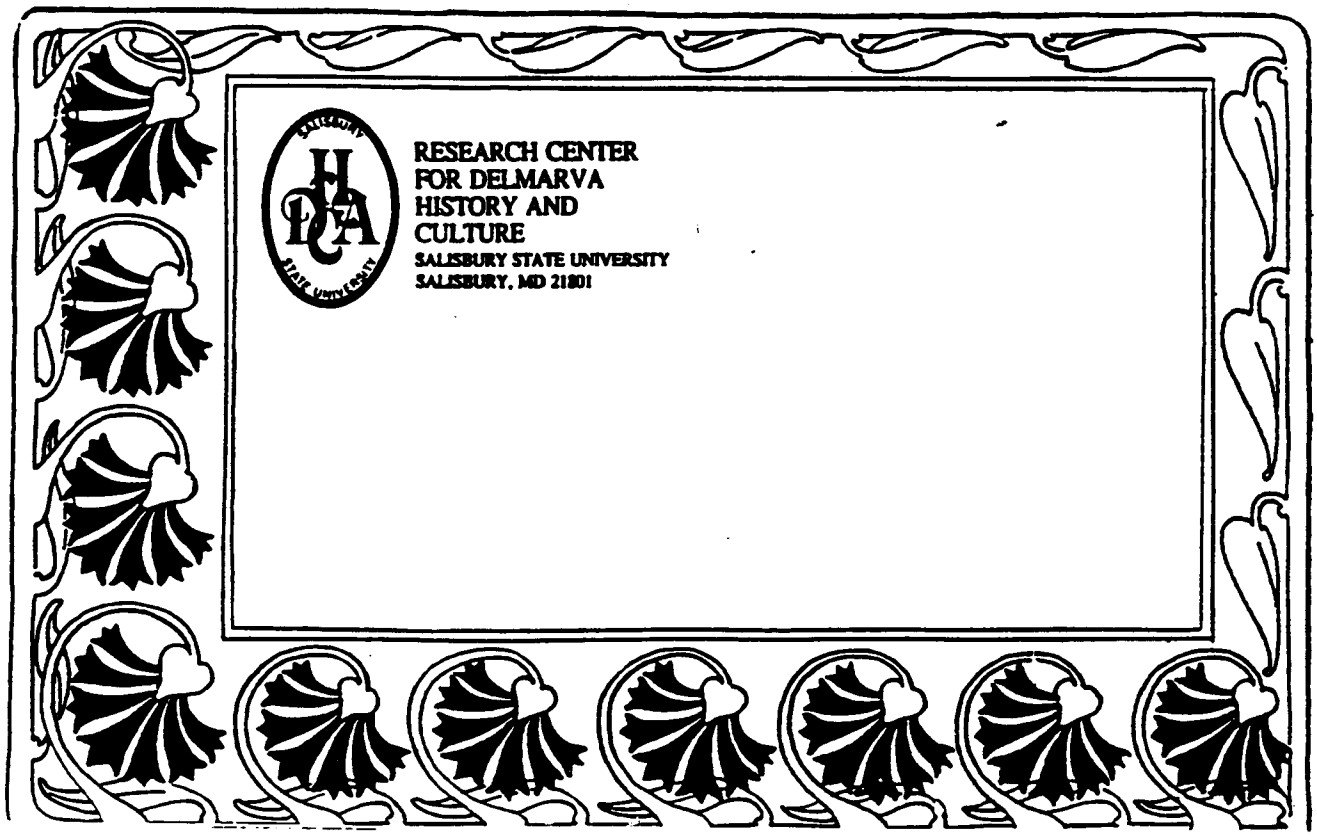
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